

CLAIMS

1. A pickup truck comprising:

a cab;

5 a sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion with an elongated opening formed in the sidewall between the cab and the rearward portion; and

at least one fastening element mounted with respect to the sidewall for mounting any one of a plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules at least
10 partially within the elongated opening to provide or alter functionality of the sidewall.

2. The pickup truck of claim 1, wherein said at least one fastening element faces the elongated opening.

3. The pickup truck of claim 2, wherein said at least one fastening element is a hole formed in the sidewall.

4. The pickup truck of claim 1, wherein said at least one fastening element is configured for releasable engagement with a complementary fastening element on a sidewall module to enable module interchangeability.

5. The pickup truck of claim 1, wherein the elongated opening extends from the forward portion to the rearward portion of the sidewall.

6. A method of advantageously providing flexibility to pickup truck assembly and functionality, the method comprising:

maintaining an inventory having a plurality sidewall modules, each of the
5 plurality of sidewall modules in the inventory being mountable in a pickup truck having

a cab, a sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion
with an elongated opening formed in the sidewall between the cab and the rearward
portion to receive at least a portion of one of said sidewall modules, and at least one
10 fastening element mounted with respect to the sidewall;

wherein each of the plurality of sidewall modules has at least one
complementary fastening element thereon engageable with said at least one fastening
element; and

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wherein the plurality of sidewall modules includes a first version and a
second version of sidewall module; the first version being differently configured from the
second version.

7. The method of claim 6, further comprising:

providing a first pickup truck, the first pickup truck having a first cab and
a first sidewall, the first sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion with a
5 first elongated opening formed in the first sidewall between the cab and the rearward
portion, and at least one fastening element mounted with respect to the first sidewall for
mounting any one of the plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules at least
partially within the first elongated opening to provide or alter functionality of the first
sidewall; and

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attaching a first sidewall module selected from the inventory to the first
pickup truck such that at least a portion of the first sidewall module is within the first
elongated opening of the first sidewall.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the first pickup truck includes a second sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion with a second elongated opening formed in the second sidewall between the cab and the rearward portion, and at least one fastening element mounted with respect to the second sidewall for mounting
5 any one of a plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules at least partially within the second elongated opening to provide or alter functionality of the second sidewall; and

wherein the method further comprises attaching a second sidewall module to the first pickup truck such that at least a portion of the second sidewall module is
10 within the second elongated opening, the second sidewall module being differently-structured and having a different functionality from the first sidewall module.

9. The method of claim 7, further comprising:

providing a second pickup truck, the second pickup truck having a second cab and a second sidewall, the second sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward
5 portion with an elongated opening formed in the second sidewall between the second cab and the rearward portion, and at least one fastening element mounted with respect to the second sidewall at which any one of the plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules is mountable to provide or alter functionality of the sidewall; and

10 attaching a second sidewall module selected from the inventory to the second pickup truck such that at least a portion of the second sidewall module is within the elongated opening of the second sidewall;

wherein the second sidewall module is a different version from the first
15 sidewall module.

10. The method of claim 6, further comprising:

granting possession of a sidewall module taken from the inventory in a financial transaction.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising attaching the sidewall module taken from the inventory in a pickup truck.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising granting possession of the pickup truck in a financial transaction.

13. The method of claim 6, wherein the inventory includes at least one preassembled module forming a tonneau cover.

14. The method of claim 6, wherein the inventory includes a hinged panel.

15. The method of claim 6, wherein the inventory includes a module having a removable plank for use as a ramp.

16. A method of adding or altering pickup truck sidewall functionality, the method comprising:

5 possessing a pickup truck, the pickup truck including a cab and a first sidewall, the first sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion with a first elongated opening formed in the first sidewall between the cab and the rearward portion, and at least one fastening element mounted with respect to the first sidewall for mounting any one of a plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules at least partially within the first elongated opening to provide or alter functionality of the first sidewall; and

attaching a first sidewall module to the pickup truck such that the first sidewall module is at least partially within the first elongated opening.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the pickup truck has a second sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion with a second elongated opening formed in the second sidewall between the cab and the rearward portion, and at least one fastening element mounted with respect to the second sidewall for mounting
5 any one of a plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules at least partially within the second elongated opening to provide or alter functionality of the second sidewall; and

wherein the method further comprises attaching a second sidewall module to the pickup truck such that the second sidewall module is at least partially within the
10 second elongated opening; and

wherein the second sidewall module is differently-structured and has a different functionality from the first sidewall module.

18. The method of claim 16, further comprising removing a second sidewall module from the first elongated opening prior to said attaching the first sidewall module, the second sidewall module being differently-structured and having a differently functionality from the first sidewall module.

19. A pickup truck comprising:

a sidewall having a forward portion and a rearward portion with an elongated opening formed in the sidewall between the forward and rearward portions;
5 and

at least one fastening element facing the elongated opening and at which any one of a plurality of differently-configured sidewall modules is releasably mountable to provide or alter functionality of the sidewall.